



**US Army Corps
of Engineers
Fort Worth District**

News Release

Release No. CESWF-PA-00-07 Contact: Ron Ruffennach

For Release: Immediate 7 Jan 00 Phone: (817) 978-2196

Fort Worth Boat Show organizers help promote local lifejacket exchange program for kids

A new child's lifejacket can be the ticket you need to get into the annual Fort Worth Boat Show, Jan. 14-23, being held at the Fort Worth Convention Center. Organizers of the show will allow up to a family of four to be admitted to the event if they bring in one new child- or youth-size Coast Guard approved lifejacket.

The lifejacket "entrance fee" is designed to help promote the Lifejacket Exchange Program, which is coordinated through the Tarrant County Safe Kids Coalition, made up of 25 agencies including the Army Corps of Engineers, Cook Children's Medical Center, the Red Cross and others. The coalition's focus is on preventing drownings and near drownings that involve young children left unsupervised around water.

The Lifejacket Exchange Program began in 1998 as a way to educate the public on water safety and the correct usage of personal flotation devices. It allows parents to trade in their children's "floaties," raft or other non-Coast Guard approved flotation devices for a new, properly fitted lifejacket, free of charge. Since 1998, 517 new lifejackets have been distributed to children who had been wearing improperly sized, worn out and unsafe personal flotation devices in the past.

The new lifejackets brought in to the boat show will be distributed to children this spring at several locations in Tarrant County.